(c) The incident took place near a railway crossing on 7th July 2004 at around 2400 hrs, when the driver and escort Shri Madan Lal, Shri Paramjit Rana and Sepoy Sanjay Kumar noticed one person running away from the rear of the vehicle into the bushes. The driver and escort, on preliminary check, noticed that the vehicle ropes were loosened at the rear and suspecting a theft, they lodged an FIR with Julwani Police Post of Badwani District. Subsequently, on carrying out a detailed check of the consignment, no loss was noticed and the same was intimated by Central Aviation Stores Depot Delhi Cantonment to the Julwani Police Post, Badwani District, *vide* a communication dated 26.7.2004 to treat the case as closed.

Merger of Secunderabad Cantonment Board with Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad

1476. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been received in the Ministry to merge Secunderabad Cantonment Board with the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad;

(b) if so, when such a request was received in the Ministry; and

(c) the action contemplated by the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A request was received during the year 1999. A similar request has also been received on 19th July 2004.

(c) The request of the State Government was considered by the Government and it has not been found feasible to merge the Cantonment areas with the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad due to security considerations.

Casualties in De-mining Operations

1477. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Army personnel/civilians killed in de-mining operations

on the Indo-Pak borders and LoC during the year 2002-2003 and as on date,

(b) whether it is a fact that the casualties during de-mining operations were more mainly due to the lack of advanced de-mining equipments,

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to provide the Army with advanced de-mining and safety equipments for expeditious and safe completion of de-mining operations; and

(d) if not, the reasons for casualties in de-mining operations?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE). (a) The number of Army personnel & civilians killed in de-Mining operations on the Indo-Pak border are being compiled and shall be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) No, Sir

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Manual recovery of minefields is an inescapable part of the de-mining process along with other methods, and thus cannot altogether be dispensed with. Accidents arise out of the operational urgency of laying mine fields, adverse whether and terrain conditions prevailing at the time the mines were laid and recovered, mines drifting due to heavy rains, rodents moving the mines and growth of dense vegetation obstructing the recovery operations in the minefield

Delay in Arrival of Hawk AJTs

1478. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inspite of signing agreements, the Hawk Advanced Jet Trainers are expected to reach India in September, 2007,

(b) if so, the reasons for delay, and

(c) how Indian Air Force will train their pilots meanwhile?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) According to the contract with M/s BAe Systems Limited, United Kingdom, the delivery of the 24 Hawk Advanced Jet Trainers in flyaway